DOCUMENTATION

Purpose: This chapter describes the documentation process for recording information in the electronic case file to support eligibility and benefit level decisions.

CLARIFYING INFORMATION

1.   Documentation reflects:

    a.   Statements made by members of the assistance unit and others;

    b.   How those statements were verified;

    c.   Eligibility decisions made and actions taken on the case; and;

    d.   Why the actions were taken.

2.   Documentation provides:

    a.   An ongoing permanent history of actions taken and decisions made;

    b.   A support of eligibility, ineligibility and benefit level determination;

    c.   Credibility for decisions when used as evidence in legal matters;

    d.   A trail for auditors to determine the accuracy of the benefits issued.

WORKER RESPONSIBILITIES

1.   Follow these principles when documenting:

    a.   **Clear**   Use readily understood language. Avoid jargon and abbreviations not commonly used.

    b.   **Concise**   Documentation is subject to public review. Stick to the facts relevant to determining eligibility or benefit level. Do not include your opinion. Write in a non-judgmental manner.

c.   **Complete**   The documentation must support the eligibility decision and allow others to determine what was done and why.

d.   **Consistent**   Explain how conflicts or inconsistencies of information were resolved. Demonstrate the reasonableness of decisions. Ensure that what you document accurately describes what happened with the case.

2.   The Narrative (NARR) is the primary location for case documentation. It does not need to be lengthy, but it does need to be complete. Information that relates to specific eligibility factors (such as shelter costs) should be documented in the REMARKS section behind the appropriate screen. General case information is to be documented on the NARR, with a "pointer" to the specific screen (e.g., "See Remarks behind SHEL.") The Narrative should also indicate if the interview was face to face or by phone, or if a desk review was done.

3.   Document verbal or written statements by including:

a.   If the statement was made in person, by mail, or by phone;

b.   The name (and phone number, if by phone) of the person making the statement—if the client made the statement, indicate which client;

c.   The relationship of the person to the client;

d.   Date that the statement was made;

e.   Substance of the statement;

f.   Eligibility factor that the statement verifies.

Narrative (NARR) Screen

On NARR, document all case activity including but not limited to:

1.   The results of screening for expedited food assistance;

2.   Applications, reviews and recertifications, including the type of interview (face to face, phone, or desk review);

3.   Approvals, denials, terminations, and reasons for actions taken;

4.   If case is pending, what information was requested, and the due date for this information;

5.   Any contact with assistance unit members or collateral contacts;

6.   Changes reported and/or discovered;

7.   How changes were verified; and

8.   Effect of any change on benefits.

Remarks (REMA) Screens

When valid value [OT] (other), [CC] (collateral contact / statement), or any valid value that is not self-explanatory is used as verification, document what the source is, how it verified the item, why it was accepted, etc;

1.   (ADDR) Screen

      a.   The change date for all address changes;

      b.   That an address inquiry has been done for match of other recipients living at the same address (and the results);

      c.   Reason for using mailing address rather than actual residential address;

      d.   Date that Address Confidentiality Program began and ended;

      e.   Limited English Proficiency (LEP), document what language if valid value [OT] used and when and why an LEP client requests all correspondence in English;

2.   (AREP) Screen

      a.   Add in additional telephone numbers and clarifying information on AREP relationship to client;

      b.   The reason a protective payee is in place and for how long.

3.   (STAT) Screen

       a.   Eligibility information regarding special programs;

       b.   Reasons for using a 500 level reason code;

       c.   If client opted out of WASHCAP and any other information offered by the client regarding this decision;

       d.   How a relative of specified degree was established and verified.

4.   (DEM1), (DEM2), (DEM3), (DEM4), (DEM5) Screens

       a.   If born in another country and US citizenship is claimed, how the client meets citizenship requirements;

       b.   Reason for any inconsistencies with the Social Security number (such as using a false number);

       c.   If assistance was received in another state, and when it ended;

       d.   If divorce decree is in file;

       e.   Unpaid medical bills and any need for help paying them, other medical insurance (and Third Party Liability forms filed), how client's incapacity was verified (for GAU); other disability information; date referred to incap worker, date of referral to SSI facilitator;

       f.   Necessary Supplemental Accommodation (NSA), document what arrangements have been made;

       g.   Result of FORS check, particularly if the client has a felony drug conviction. Include date of conviction and reason for conviction. If client now qualifies for food assistance, include date client was assessed as chemically dependent, date and type of treatment program, and if it included vocational services.

5.   (ALAS) Screen

a.   If client is an alien and is federally eligible, how the client meets federal eligibility requirements;

b.   If eligibility is based on work quarters, provide information on quarters and that they were not earned while client received federal means-tested benefits, and provide information, if appropriate, on eligibility gained through parent's or spouse's work quarters (updated at each recertification);

c.   If there are children aged 16-20 in the AU, indicate if they are in school full time and what documentation supports this. Indicate if child is half-time. If not in school, when did child leave school;

d.   Information about the sponsored alien's sponsor.

6.   (INST) Screen

a.   Medicaid Personal Care (MPC) information;

b.   The change date and rate for all facility/program changes;

c.   Details about uncovered expenses;

d.   Details about other insurance;

e.   Details about room and board exceptions;

f.   Document ETR exemption;

g.   Document any ACES processing alternatives, e.g., increasing a facility rate so that ACES processes accurately;

h.   Document guardianship and attorney expenses and period the order covers, including the date of the court order;

i.   Show math for ending date of uncovered expense payoff estimate, and indicate that alert has been set.

7.   (FSME) Screen

    a.   Information about the client's medical expenses, if not readily identifiable from the FSME screen;

    b.   If eligible client claims no medical expenses, document that the client was informed of eligibility for a medical expense deduction.

8.   (RES1), (RES2), (RES3), (TRAN) Screens

    a.   If no bank account, how does the client pay bills, cash checks, etc.

    b.   Joint bank accounts with a non-AU member, how much of that account is available to the AU member, how much client deposits and withdraws, and why funds are not available (if this applies);

    c.   If no vehicle, how does the client get around;

    d.   A car that the client has use of but does not own, whether borrowed or leased;

    e.   Explain values set on vehicles and how the value was determined (e.g., NADA, Kelly Blue Book, dealership);

    f.   Details about resources which are temporarily unavailable or inaccessible and a date set for follow-up;

    g.   Why value of property is excluded;

    h.   How separate property was verified;

    i.   Details about life insurance policies or burial funds;

    j.   How a transferred resource affects eligibility;

    k.   Details of each transfer—if unable to itemize, summarize the details;

    l.   Document who property was transferred to, when the transfer occurred, and the period of ineligibility;

    m.   Document discussion with client regarding one year to transfer resources to the community spouse.

9.   (EARN) and (EDOC) Screens gather many details regarding earned income. Each field should be completed accurately, but not all details can be captured there. Remarks are necessary as follows:

    a.   A general work history for each adult in the assistance units;

    b.   If not employed, when the client last worked and the name of the employer;

    c.   Work information on clients age 16, 17, and 18;

    d.   If the client stopped working, was it a job quit and does it affect eligibility;

    e.   Which prospective budgeting method is used, and why;

    f.   An accounting of draws or tips or other special circumstances;

    g.   Pay period ending dates and dates paid for the month being recorded;

    h.   Extra pay or bonuses received or expected;

    i.   Earned Income Credit (EIC) received. If on a tax return, what was the EIC amount and what was the remainder;

    j.   Separate data when the client has more than one job;

    k.   Special types of employment, such as temporary agency, school district (is client off for the summer, what are the dates, is client paid during the summer); farm or agricultural work;

    l.   Details on client's self-employment job and earnings—is client licensed, are there partners or employees;

    m.   For Work Study, type of WS (Title IV, WorkFirst, other), length of work-study period, date one work study transitions to another type.

10.   (UNER) Screen

a.   Source of income, if client has multiple sources, and is not clear on UNER screen—include phone number or address for income source if you expect this income to change;

b.   Which prospective budgeting method is used and why;

c.   Why deductions are allowed;

d.   Pay periods;

e.   Begin and end dates;

f.   Status on child support for each child;

g.   Document discussion about potential benefits and if client is required to apply.

11.   (SANC) screen:

a.   Details about sanction, including start date and end date.

12.   (SHEL) screen:

a.   List other persons living in the residence;

b.   List ineligible members of the assistance unit;

c.   Provide information on how expenses are shared if others are in the home;

d.   If household qualifies for SUA, how they qualify. This is especially important if the household qualifies because of wood or propane heat, LIHEAP, or excess utility costs;

e.   State purchase and prepare agreement with non-household members (provide client IDs for the non-HH members if applicable, and relationship to AU members);

f.   Amount of full rent if subsidized, who pays subsidy, and amount of client's share of subsidized rent.

g.   If someone else routinely pays any amount of the rent, who pays it, how much, and if rent is paid directly to the landlord;

h.   If landlord lives at same address, relationship of client to landlord;

i.   Details if client is working in exchange for rent—when this began, how much is worked off each month;

j.   Give other (SHEL) screen pointer when expenses are listed on a (SHEL) screen for other than the head of the assistance unit.

13.   (LTCD) Screen:

a.   List type of income and gross amounts;

b.   List type of resources and values;

c.   List separate property and add documentation to clarify ownership;

d.   For community spouse, complete the community spouse's income and resource screens.

14.   (DPEX) Screen:

a.   WorkFirst Job Search Workshop start and end date;

b.   WCCC—Is client receiving WCCC? If not, why not? What is WCCC case number? How often is the provider paid? How was the anticipated cost determined?

15.   (AREN) Screen:

a.   Document emergency reported by client;

b.   Document any resources the client has available to meet the need;

c.   If approved, document the need the department paid;

d.   If denied, document reason for denial;

e.   Document who the expense was paid to.

16.   (AREQ) Screen

a.   Document needs that caused client to request ongoing additional requirements (such as restaurant meals). Indicate if request was approved or denied (and why, if denied).

17.   (DEEM) Screen:

a.   Document any obligation the client has to pay child support;

b.   Document any garnishments taken from the client's income and how that garnishment was verified;

c.   If client is a sponsored alien, document the sponsor's name, income, and household composition.

18.   (WORK) Screen

a.   Details on sanctions. If a WorkFirst sanction, was client informed of need to cooperate with FS E&T;

b.   ABAWD status for food assistance, reviewed and documented at each recertification;

c.   Schedule for orientation, workshops, job search, etc.

19.   (MISC) Screen

a.   Result of SLAM interview;

(1)   Explain change in expedited food assistance status, if applicable;

b.   Explain if expedited benefits were issued with postponed verifications (what verifications were postponed).

20.   (FSFI), (CAFI), (MAFI) Screens:

a.   Overpayment/Underpayment information, the period of the overpayment, what caused it;

b.   Why a BEG is ignored.

The ESA Operations Support Manual (formerly Manual E) contains a complete glossary of abbreviations. Acronyms are listed at the front of this manual. Listed here are the more commonly used and understood abbreviations:

aka	also known as	ap	absent parent
app	application	a/r	applicant/recipient
bc	birth certificate	bp	base period
canc	cancelled	cc	collateral contact, child care
chg	change	coop	cooperation
cr	case record	cs	child support, client statement, community spouse
csv	cash surrender value	cw	case worker
cy	calendar year	dbt	debit
deduc	deduction	del	delete
dep	dependent	desc	describe
det	determine	disc	discovery, discount
div	divorce	dob/dod	date of birth/date of death
ei	earned income	ep	employability plan
er	eligibility review	es	employer statement
est	estimate	exp	expedited
fed	federal	ff or f2f	face to face
fh	fair hearing	fmv	fair market value
gdn	guardian	hh	household
hoh	head of household	hv	home visit
inc	income, incapacitated	incl	included
ind	individual, indicated	inf	information
inq	inquiry	int	interview, intention, interest
is	Institutional spouse	l l or LL	landlord
max	maximum	min	minimum
misc	miscellaneous	na	not available/applicable, non-assistance
mo	monthly, mother	nr	non-excluded resource
narr	narrative	ov	office visit

op	overpayment	pc	program change
pa	public assistance	pers	personal
pd	paid, police dept	pp	protective payee, purchase & prepare
pg	pregnant	prog	program
pna	personal needs allowance	poa	power of attorney
ppt	pregnant/parenting teen	pt	part-time
prop	property	qtr	quarter
qp	qualifying parent	red	redetermine, redirect, reduce
rec	received, record	ref	referral, reference, refugee, refund
reg	register, regular	rel	related, release
rep	representative, replace	res	resources
req	requested	ret	retroactive, returned
resch	rescheduled	s/mo	stepmother
sanc	sanction	sch	school
s/fa	stepfather	sep	separate
sd	spenddown	ss	social services, supplied shelter
sf	seasonal farmworker	stmt	statement
std	standard	supp	supplement
sup	supervisor	sys	system
sw	social worker	term	terminate
svc	service	tpl	third party liability
tc	telephone call	trans	transfer, translated, transitional benefits
tp	treatment plan	ui	underissuance, unearned income
tr	transfer	unl	unlicensed
ub	unborn	upd	unpaid
unk	unknown	veh	vehicle
up	underpayment	vet	veteran
util	utility	wt	warrant
ver	verification, verified	xmit	transmit
wk	week	ytd	year-to-date
xfer	transfer		
yr	year		

ACES PROCEDURES

ACES provides ample space for documentation on the data collection field, the Narrative (NARR) screen, and the Remarks (REMA) screens. The combination of these screens provides great detail and is acceptable evidence for Fair Hearings and criminal prosecutions.

The (NARR) screen is used for general information and the (REMA) screens for details.